DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 220 389 SO 014 244

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TITLE Report on Annual Women's Re-entry Program Workshop (4th, Albuquerque, New Mexico, July 31, 1981).
INSTITUTION New Mexico State Commission on the Status of Women, Albuquerque.
PUB DATE 31 Jul 81
NOTE 9p.; The agenda was developed from a pre-workshop survey conducted by the New Mexico Displaced Homemakers' Office.

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Day Care; *Displaced Homemakers; Educational Innovation; *Females; Financial Support; Higher Education; *Reentry Students; *Reentry Workers; Sex Fairness

ABSTRACT

This report briefly describes presentations made at a re-entry workshop which was sponsored by the New Mexico Commission on the Status of Women. The 45 participants included representatives from post-secondary programs and institutions throughout the state. The purpose of this workshop was to provide information to state institutions and agencies which seek to respond to the needs of displaced homemakers who become re-entry students. In the welcome and opening remarks, the chairperson of the workshop stated that 50% of all women in this country die alone and in poverty. Two factors which affect this dramatic statistic were cited. First, on the average, females continue to earn only 59% of the average male wage. Second, when homemakers lose that position there are no retirement benefits and no income, and they hold skills that are difficult to transfer to the out-of-the-home job market. During this transition from the private sphere of home and family to the public sphere of job and wages the need for assistance is greatly heightened. Workshop presentations were made on the following topics: innovative educational programs; daycare on campus/cooperatives; sex equity issues; re-entry service directory; on-campus re-entry student services; and nonfederal program funding. (RM)

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REPORT ON

FOURTH ANNUAL

WOMEN'S RE-ENTRY PROGRAM

WORKSHOP

ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO

July 31, 1981

SP 014 244

PREPARED BY:

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N.M.C.S.W.

The Fourth Annual Re-entry Workshop, sponsored by the New Mexico Commission on the Status of Women, was held July 31, 1981 in Albuquerque. The 45 participants included representatives from post-secondary programs and institutions throughout the state. The agenda was developed from a pre-workshop survey conducted by the New Mexico Displaced Homemakers' Office. This report will follow the agenda and briefly describe each presentation.

Welcome and Opening Remarks.

Ms. Bonnie Miner of the Displaced Homemakers' Office, New Mexico Commission on the Status of Women, chaired the workshop and gave the introductory remarks. Ms. Miner stated 50% of all women in this country die alone and in poverty. Two factors which affect this dramatic statistic were cited: 1) on the average, females continue to earn only 59% of the average male wage; and 2) when a homemaker loses that position there is no retirement, no income and they hold skills that are difficult to transfer to the out-of-the-home job market. During this transition from the private sphere of home and family to the public sphere of job and wages the need for assistance is greatly heightened. The purpose of the Fourth Annual Workshop was to provide information to those institutions and agencies which seek to respond to those needs.

Ms. Miner reviewed the agenda for the day and encouraged participants to examine the materials on the display tables. The staff of the New Mexico Commission on the Status of Women and workshop participants were introduced and the workshop presentations began.

Innovative Educational Programs.

The first speaker, Marla Wonn, from the New Mexico Displaced Homemakers Office, addressed the issue of barriers to education which re-entry students encounter. Specific barriers mentioned were: 1) scheduling of classes; 2) degree residency requirements; 3) limitations on financial aid for part-time students; 4) childcare and daycare programs which are inadequate or non-existent; and, 5) attitudinal biases that perceive the part-time student as "less committed" than the full time student. Ms. Wonn summarized these concerns by stating the educational and service needs of the re-entry student are often misunderstood or at worst, simply ignored. She asked that the re-entry student be viewed more accurately as someone with the challenging multiple responsibilities of family, work, and school.

Ms. Wonn offered specific suggestions to remediate some of these problems: 1) childcare for evening classes; 2) drop-in childcare services; 3) increased financial aid for part-time students; 4) student lounges for waiting/studying between classes;

and 5) evening hour services (library, bookstore, and faculty and administrative offices). Innovative educational programs which Ms. Wonn proposed included the week-end college, external degree programs, and early morning/evening credit classes. Additional suggestions mentioned were: providing re-entry students with information regarding credit by examination; exploring the possibilities of multimedia educational programs; and further developing cooperative education programs with private business to include the older re-entry student.

The second part of this presentation was given by Dr. Andrew Johnson. In his introductory remarks, Dr. Johnson questioned several assumptions. He stated women should not view returning to college as their only alternative when displaced from their position as homemaker; and he described in some detail that the conventionally defined college student (18-22 years of age) has not been and will not be the main consumer of higher education. He asked workshop participants to consider instead the perspective that older students are in the majority when part-time students are included in survey data. He underscored the statements made previously that educational institutions have a responsibility to build the self-confidence of the re-entry student as well as provide the necessary services and facilities. He added, however, that the institutions also have the responsibility to design an educational method which challenges the re-entry student. The approach should be one of providing a chance for success through educational restitution.

Dr. Johnson then mentioned one alternative--receiving credit for prior learning. He stated learning should be viewed in terms of mastery. Institutions of higher education should more closely examine credit for prior learning--giving credit for properly documented experience--as a matter of equity and economics.

Dr. Johnson then briefly outlined the documentation processes commonly used. He described profiles of typical career problems and various strategies for their solution within the credit for prior learning framework. He invited workshop participants to explore the alternatives mentioned by becoming more familiar with the publications and programs of the Council for the Advancement of Experiential Learning.

<u>Daycare on Campus/Cooperatives</u>.

The first presentation of this panel was given by Dr. Pauline Turner, Director of the Manzanita Daycare Center at the University of New Mexico, who reviewed the historical development of the Center. Manzanita's three purposes, in order of priority, are to train university students, conduct research in the field, and to provide a service for the campus community. Dr. Turner

noted there are only services for full-time children; no part-time or drop-in services are available.

Dr. Turner then outlined the staffing pattern, student selection, and fee structure. She described Manzanita's parent involvement program which includes required observational visits and conferences as well as voluntary educational and social programs. Manzanita does have a Parent Advisory Board which meets monthly to plan parent assistance and involvement in the Center. In a final note, Dr. Turner mentioned her concern regarding the daycare needs of re-entry students and the urgency of part-time and drop-in care on campus.

Helene Abrams, a teacher at the Albuquerque Pre-School Cooperative, was the second panel member to speak. Ms. Abrams reported the history of the Cooperative which was established in 1964. She stated the basis for the Cooperative's founding was to lessen the dichotomy between home and school. Recent developments include extended care two times a week and drop-in care for families within the Coop.

The program which is totally funded through tuition on a sliding scale was described as having a structure which encouraged active parent participation. The Cooperative's success and growth was attributed to this strong involvement and to the importance of a shared philosophy among parents and staff.

The third panelist, George O'Neil, Administrator with the University of New Mexico Daycare Cooperative, also briefly outlined the development of the Center on the UNM campus. Mr. O'Neil noted the case for campus daycare was first presented and cogently argued by feminists within the University. Continued success was attributed by Mr. O'Neil to the parent involvement which is critical. Parents are required to work three hours per week at the Cooperative and thereby provide an invaluable evaluation process and support network. Student body evaluation, indicated by high votes of support, was also mentioned as extremely important.

Mr. O'Neil stated the Cooperative is trying to move toward a model program for campus daycare. The staff and student participation is constantly changing--a situation both difficult and dynamic. Issues which the Cooperative is currently facing are: how to encourage and channel both emotional and political support; and how to involve men in daycare. This year's program also includes an interdisciplinary lecture series and a counseling component.

A final note regarding the importance of support for daycare was made by Marg Elliston regarding Title XX monies and the daycare information and referral services of Carino at the Family Resource Center, Albuquerque Technical Vocational Institute.

Sex Equity Issues.

Historical information regarding vocational sex equity efforts in New Mexico was presented by Janice B. Hightower, Sex Equity Coordinator, New Mexico Department of Education. Ms. Hightower described the current activities of her office which include: technical assistance; program, curricula, and textbook evaluations; and proposal development for both individuals and private, non-profit organizations. A recent publication edited by Ms. Hightower, the Directory of Non-Traditional Workers in New Mexico, was made available to all workshop participants.

Additional activities mentioned were career day presentations and a recently produced television program. Ms. Hightower encouraged initiative and discussion in proposal development for funding through her office. She stated there have been no proposals regarding re-entry programs and offered her technical assistance should participants wish to explore funding possibilities.

Re-entry Services Directory.

A short addendum to the agenda was made and Arietta Maria, Intern with the New Mexico Commission on the Status of Women, explained the current development of a state directory of services for counselors and re-entry students at post-secondary institutions. A check sheet was handed out to each post-secondary institution representative for verification of information assembled in a recently conducted survey by the Displaced Homemakers' Office. Publication plans include a one-sheet chart of services and an accompanying directory in booklet form.

On-Campus Re-entry Student Services.

Returning to the panel format, this presentation began with Pat Wolf, Counseling Center, New Mexico State University - Las Cruces. Ms. Wolf described the results of a research survey conducted on the Las Cruces campus. The full survey is available from Ms. Wolf's office and was not repeated here. Areas covered in the survey instrument included demographic information, motivation, stress factors, evaluation of current services and suggestions for service development or improvement.

The most surprising preliminary conclusion was that re-entry students are generally unaware of services available. Furthermore, services recommended by students during the survey are currently provided. Specific mention was made by Ms. Wolf regarding several programs: career/vocational planning workshops open to the community; a career laboratory with one free counseling session to community members; Project Support; the Center for Learning Assistance; and COPE, an enrichment program.

In her closing comments, Ms. Wolf stated all credits for an associate degree are available at night, enabling students to complete the degree without undue disruption of their daytime responsibilities. NMSU also has initiated a weekend meal plan for re-entry students. More specific recommendations, as a result of an attitudinal survey of faculty and staff, will be developed.

The second section of this presentation was provided by Patricia Luna, Office of School Relations, and Joan Bruin, Returning Students Association, from the University of New Mexico. Ms. Bruin first outlined the Association's goals, development, structure and funding. Services and programs which are currently provided include an informal student lounge, two orientation programs, and a variety of workshops throughout the year. An office is maintained in the student union building and a newsletter is published regularly. Course and teacher evaluations are kept on file and the Association is an advocate for returning students. "The most important function of the Association, in essence," stated Ms. Bruin, "is to help people feel part of the University. People who feel part of this University stay."

Patricia Luna then briefly described the re-entry program services at the University of New Mexico. The original organizing efforts began with women re-entry students who wished to develop an effective voice on campus. As the average age at UNM has risen to the current 26.6 in 1981 (students over 25 comprising 42% of the student body), the potential role of the Returning Students Association and re-entry program has markedly increased, according to Ms. Luna. Important aspects of this potential include recruitment of new students; support system development; and funding for higher education--important elements in the future of post-secondary institutions in the state.

Non-federal Program Funding.

Marla Wonn, New Mexico Displaced Homemakers Office, introduced the speakers for this final section of the workshop. As noted by Ms. Wonn, all social services will be faced with increased cutbacks in funding; therefore, the New Mexico Commission on the Status of Women included a workshop component to provide information on alternative program funding.

The first speaker, Ms. Mary Poole, Presbyterian Foundation, outlined and evaluated various fundraising approaches. In order of least effective to most effective, Ms. Poole listed the following: 1) media approach; 2) direct mailings; 3) proposals to foundations; 4) special events and product sales; and 5) personal contacts.

According to Ms. Poole, media appeals have high publicity value, but are limited as a fundraising tool--a "shotgun approach." Direct mailings were considered an important method to make large numbers of people aware of programs; however, they are not very personal and, therefore, have limited fundraising potential. Ms. Poole stated that foundations have very specific interests, and the amount of monies for women is considered miniscule. Although the actual money raised and hourly involvement may be problematic in special events or product sales, Ms. Poole considers this method viable in New Mexico. Many people become involved and can have lots of fun or "get something for their money." The most cost effective method, according to Ms. Poole is through personal contacts. An indispensible part of this process is to write a clear and concise case statement before any funds are solicited. Assistance in identifying a constituencey can be obtained in directories published by the Chamber of Commerce, various business or social clubs, the yellow pages, newspaper articles regarding special events in business, program donors for events such as the opera or rodeo, and simply word-of-mouth.

Ms. Poole stressed repeatedly that leadership must be enlisted early in a campaign. This leadership must be committed to the cause, respected in the community, persistent, and optimistic. Of primary importance is the leadership's familiarity with the community. Ms. Poole estimated that in a typical campaign one-third of the fundraising goal is obtained from ten people, one-third from 100 people, and the final third from all others. Additional strategies mentioned were to set clear time tables, develop well-designed, but not "slick" presentation materials, use a team approach whenever possible, and most importantly, give some form of recognition to the donor.

The second speaker was Ms. Norma Milanovich, Director of the New Mexico Vocational Education Equity Center at the University of New Mexico. Ms. Milanovich gave a short update on current funding levels in several federal programs for women. She recommended staying in close communication and supporting directly those who have advocated sex equity programs during the past few years. She provided workshop participants with a list of names from the sex equity movement whom she recommended contacting.

Ms. Milanovich then described different approaches to obtaining funding from the private sector. She stated foundations, just as the federal and state governments, publish requests for proposals ("RFPs") which serve as clear guidelines for proposal development. She recommended exploring local, private sector funding sources in the business community as well as scholarships, fellowships and assistantships in educational institutions. An additional funding alternative, according to Ms. Milanovich, is to teach students how to form companies and partnerships to compete for grants. Frequently, individuals may not be eligible for funding, but

companies are. Ms. Milanovich encouraged the workshop participants to explore this avenue as well.

Handouts regarding funding sources were provided by Ms. Bonnie Miner, Displaced Homemakers' Office, New Mexico Commission on the Status of Women.

Evaluations of the workshop were filled out by program participants and are on file at the Displaced Homemakers' Office.